



P.O.V.

Season

19

Discussion Guide

# Lomax the Songhunter

A Film by Rogier Kappers



[www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)



## Letter from the Filmmaker

Amsterdam, Netherlands, August 2006

### Dear Colleague,

When I'm on my own and listening to a certain kind of music, I have to cry. Not always, of course, but it happens often. It wells up from deep down inside and there I am, walking through my home in a kind of ecstatic melancholia. Even if I don't know the lyrics, I know for sure what the song is about. And although I can't sing, I'm roaring with the music. I don't know exactly what happens, but I'm sure it happens to people the world over and that you can catch it sometimes too, if only for a moment.

Alan Lomax tried to capture this passing moment in his recording trips. Lomax is my hero, a Robin Hood figure who stood up for the music of poor people and passed it on to the world through radio programs and LPs. He gave a stage to the butcher boy with the blues in his body, to the greengrocer woman with that haunting voice, to the postman who was also a guitar virtuoso—all well known in their own villages but not to the world outside. He gave them a stage so they would not be forgotten.

I think Lomax's recordings are wonderful. They have an intense and open atmosphere. Crickets, barking dogs and murmuring voices in the background serve to augment their pure and original character. Listening to these CDs, I see Lomax in front of me, trekking from village to village in his old bus, dragging a heavy tape recorder. I see the parade of bakers, knife grinders and washerwomen passing his microphone to one another and playing their most beautiful songs. This image and mood was what I wanted to recreate in the film. That's why I went looking for the remains of this music.

I wanted to make a film in which Lomax could appear. Although he could hardly talk anymore, he was definitely clear in his mind, and he certainly had not lost his love of music. We could still listen to all these wonderful songs with him while he gestured enthusiastically or sang along in strange words.

I'm fascinated by old people; whole lives are hidden behind their creased faces. Lives filled with desire, disappointment, joy, sorrow, boredom, fury, despair and resignation. What is left but some photos and memories of next-of-kin? Some people temporarily win the battle against oblivion and live on briefly by leaving something: a book, a work of music, a film or a deed that is remembered. Most are rapidly forgotten. And eventually little more is left than a street name. What will be left of Alan Lomax?

The battle against oblivion is the leitmotif of the film, and it gives the documentary its mood and direction. **Lomax the Songhunter** is not a biography. It's a portrait of Alan Lomax and it sketches, through him, the battle against oblivion that every person fights and eventually loses. In the person of Alan Lomax and in "his" music, I see the battle against oblivion gaining momentum. I see it in the young Lomax, in his fight to preserve folk music in all possible ways. I see it in the old Lomax, who can hardly talk and walk. I see it in the ways in which Lomax fought to leave his mark on history. Travelling in his footsteps, I saw this theme deepening as we found out what remains of the music and met old people who are fighting oblivion in their own way—by remembering, preserving and passing on these unforgettable songs to a new generation.

### Rogier Kappers

Filmmaker, **Lomax the Songhunter**



*Rogier Kappers, Director of  
"Lomax the Songhunter."  
Photo Claartje van Swaaij*



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## Introduction

*Lomax the Songhunter*, a feature-length (54 minute) documentary, tells the story of the renowned ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax. Lomax earned a singular place for himself in American culture and arts by devoting his life to recording the world's folk music and helping to spark the American folk-music revival of the 1960s. His work not only preserved endangered songs, but also exposed such musical greats as Lead Belly and Muddy Waters to broader audiences.

In reviewing Lomax's career, the film reveals the history hidden in the rhythms and lyrics of work songs originating in jobs that no longer exist, with machines having long replaced physical labor. As an outreach tool, *Lomax the Songhunter* can be especially useful in encouraging viewers to think more deeply about the value of cultural preservation and whose cultures are and are not being preserved. It also raises questions about divisions of race and class, "high" and "low" culture, and what it means to give voice to "ordinary" people.



*Musician playing a traditional song on the bagpipe.  
Photo courtesy of "Lomax the Songhunter"*



## Potential Partners

*Lomax the Songhunter* is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- **Your local PBS station**
- **Groups that have discussed previous PBS and P.O.V. films relating to music or cultural preservation, including *The Flute Player*, *Al Otro Lado*, or *The Tailenders*.**
- **Groups focused on any of the issues listed on the right**
- **Legislators**
- **High school students**
- **Faith-based organizations and institutions**
- **Academic departments and student groups at colleges, universities, community colleges and high schools**
- **Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning, such as P.O.V.'s national partners Elderhostel Learning in Retirement Centers, members of the Listen Up! Youth Media Network, or your local library.**

## Key Issues

*Lomax the Songhunter* is an interesting tool for outreach because it takes viewers on a captivating road trip, not just geographically, but also culturally and politically. The film will be of special interest to people interested in exploring or working on the issues below:

- **Anthropology**
- **Arts and arts education**
- **Culture and cultural preservation**
- **Ethnography**
- **Ethnomusicology**
- **Folk music**
- **Folklore**
- **Historical preservation**
- **Labor history**
- **Musical styles**
- **Sociology**
- **Poverty**
- **Technology**
- **World music**

## Event Ideas

Use a screening of *Lomax the Songhunter* to:

- **Draw attention to a folk music concert series.**
- **Kickoff a recording project to collect, preserve, and share music from local musicians in your community.**



## Using this Guide

**This guide is designed to help you use *Lomax the Songhunter* as the centerpiece of a community event. It contains suggestions for organizing an event as well as ideas for how to help participants think more deeply about the issues in the film. The discussion questions are designed for a very wide range of audiences. Rather than attempt to address them all, choose one or two that best meet the needs and interests of your group.**

### Planning an Event

In addition to showcasing documentary films as an art form, screenings of P.O.V. films can be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for people from different groups or perspectives to exchange views, and/or create space for reflection. Using the questions below as a planning checklist will help ensure a high quality/high impact event.

- **Have you defined your goals?** Set realistic goals with your partners. Will you host a single event or engage in an ongoing project? Being clear about your goals will make it easier to structure the event, target publicity and evaluate results.
- **Does the way you are planning to structure the event fit your goals?** Do you need an outside facilitator, translator, or sign language interpreter? If your goal is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges. Small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)
- **Have you arranged to involve all stakeholders?** It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. If your group is planning to take action that affects people other than those present, how will you give voice to those not in the room?
- **Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel equally comfortable?** Is it wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that's easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?
- **Will the set-up of the room help you meet your goals?** Is it comfortable? If you intend to have a discussion, can people see one another? Are there spaces to use for small breakout groups? Can everyone easily see and hear the film?
- **Have you scheduled time to plan for action?** Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even when the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issue(s) on the table. For those who are new to the issue(s), just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.



## Using this Guide

### Facilitating a Discussion

**Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. By their nature, they can also give rise to deep emotions and strong beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere where people feel safe, encouraged and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share their ideas openly and honestly. Here's how:**

### Preparing Yourself

**Identify your own hot-button issues.** View the film before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

**Be knowledgeable.** You don't need to be an expert on ethnomusicology or folk music to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. In addition to the Background Information section above, you may want to take a look at the suggested websites and books in the Resources section on p.16 .

**Be clear about your role.** You may find yourself taking on several roles for an event, e.g., host, organizer, or even projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that as a facilitator your job is to remain neutral, helping move along the discussion without imposing their views on the dialogue.

**Know your group.** Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have they dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion, and socioeconomic class, can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles, and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point of view. If you are bringing together different segments of your community, we strongly recommend hiring an experienced facilitator.

### Who Should Facilitate?

You may or may not be the best person to facilitate, especially if you have multiple responsibilities for your event. If you are particularly invested in a topic, it might also be wise to ask someone more neutral to guide the dialogue.

If you need to find someone else to facilitate, some university professors, human-resource professionals, clergy and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation skills. In addition to these local resources, groups such as the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) and the National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) may be able to provide or help you locate skilled facilitators. Be sure that your facilitator receives a copy of this guide well in advance of your event.



## Using this Guide

### Preparing the Group

**Consider how well group members know one another.** If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time at the beginning of the event for introductions.

**Agree to ground rules around language.** Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically such rules include no yelling or use of slurs and asking people to speak in the first person (“I think....”) rather than generalizing for others (“Everyone knows that...”).

**Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard.** Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion. If the group is large, are there plans to break into small groups or partners, or should attendance be limited?

**Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate.** In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand each other and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening to each other actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue. This will be especially important in preventing a discussion from dissolving into a repetitive, rhetorical, political or religious debate.

**Encourage active listening.** Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening, as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal “active listening,” where participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then re-phrase to see if they have heard correctly.

**Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of his or her own experience.** Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. So everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and all of them may be accurate. It can help people to understand one another’s perspectives if people identify the evidence on which they base their opinion as well as share their views.

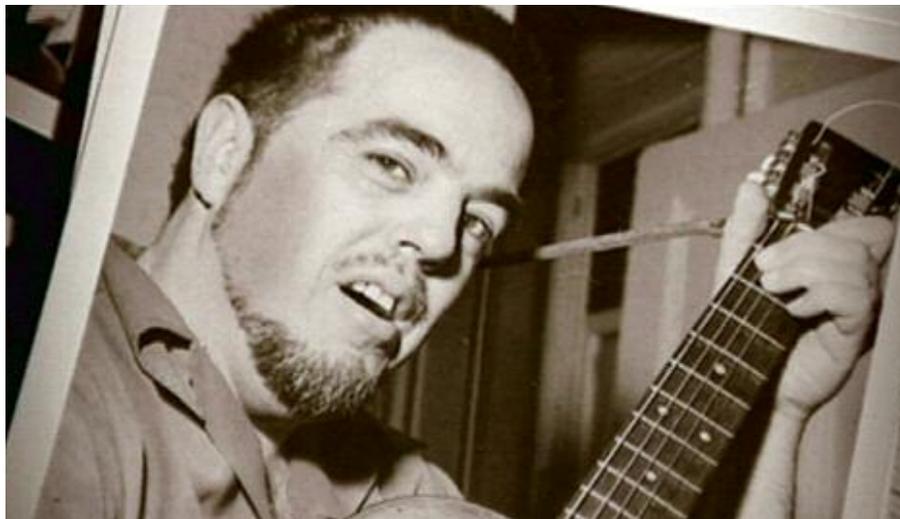
**Take care of yourself and group members.** If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space to “vent,” perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that your topic may upset people, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies and/or have local professionals present. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly, and explain things like confidentiality and whether or not press will be present.



## Background Information

### Alan Lomax

Alan Lomax was born in Austin, Texas, in 1915. At the start of his career he worked with his father, John, a folklorist and curator of folk music for the Library of Congress who had once been fired by the University of Texas for recording “those dirty old cowboy songs.” Alan would eventually expand on his father’s preservation efforts, working as a musicologist, author, disc jockey, singer, photographer, filmmaker, talent scout, concert and record producer and even television host. He is credited with helping spark the American folk music revival of the 1960s, recording key American blues artists, and preserving traditional music from around the world.



Alan Lomax.

Photo courtesy of “Lomax the Songhunter”

### The Career of Alan Lomax: Selected Highlights

**1930s**—Lomax records more than 3,000 folk-music songs (including Depression Era ballads and labor-organizing tunes) with his father, John. They publish *American Ballads and Folk Songs* together, and will later go on to release *Negro Folk Songs as Sung by Lead Belly* (1936), *Cowboy Songs* (1937) and *Our Singing Country* (1938).

**1934**—Encounters Lead Belly (Huddie Ledbetter) in a Texas prison. Will later help secure his release and produce his albums.

**1935**—Travels with writer Zora Neale Hurston and folklorist Mary Elizabeth Barnicle to collect music from the Georgia Sea Islands and along the Florida coast. Lomax and Barnicle blacken their faces with walnut juice to escape hostile attention from white neighbors. The music of black migrant workers in the Sea Islands leads them to the Bahamas, where they record an interview with sponge fishermen. Officials believe they are stirring up worker unrest and expel them.

**1937**—Lomax joins his father at the Library of Congress, where John curates the folk-song archive. Alan becomes assistant director and, eventually, director. The collection the Lomaxes amass will grow to include more than 400,000 feet of film, 5,000



Woody Guthrie, 1946

Photo courtesy of “Lomax the Songhunter”



## Background Information

hours of sounds, 2,450 videotapes and 2,000 books and journals, as well as letters, scripts, and notes.

**1939**—Begins a weekly radio program on the CBS radio network. Lomax will continue hosting American radio programs featuring folk music through the 1940s and produce similar programs for the BBC in the 1950s.

**1940s**—Makes extensive recordings of Woody Guthrie’s stories and songs.

**1941**—Makes the first recordings of cotton picker McKinley Morganfield, better known as Muddy Waters.

**1946**—Publishes *Folk Songs: USA*

**1950**—Lead Belly’s “Goodnight Irene” becomes a pop hit for the Weavers (a group of white folk singers). The Lomaxes held part of the copyright to the song and used some of the resulting royalties to finance research trips.

**1950**—Publishes *Mister Jelly Roll*, an influential text on early jazz based on 1930s oral-history interviews with New Orleans great Jelly Roll Morton.

**1950-1957**—Lomax leaves the United States for England. While in Europe he collects folk music in Spain (1953-54) and Italy (1955), helping to spark folk-music revivals in those countries.

**1959-1960**—Returns to the American South to make the first field recordings of American music in stereo. Eventually 19 albums were released on Atlantic and Prestige Records, including the first recordings by country bluesman Mississippi Fred McDowell.

**1962**—Records in the Caribbean, leaving an archive at the University of the West Indies, which shared the royalties from the recordings.

**1960s**—Stirs controversy by condemning Dylan’s use of electric instruments at the Newport Folk Festival (1965). Speaks out against the advent of folk rock in the 1960s, considering it inauthentic. Also denounces Dylan’s move from protest songs to rock songs.

**1977**—NASA includes selections of Lomax’s music collection in the recording of Earth sounds it sends into space on board the Voyager.



Alan Lomax with his daughter Anna at home in Florida  
Photo courtesy of “Lomax the Songhunter”

**1979**—Writes, directs and produces a documentary film, “The Land Where Blues Began.”

**1980s**—Supported by grants from the MacArthur and National Science Foundations, begins work on the Global Jukebox, a database of thousands of songs and dances cross-referenced with anthropological data.

**1986**—Awarded the National Medal of the Arts for his life-long contributions to music.

**1990**—Writes, directs and produces the PBS series “American Patchwork.”

**1993**—Publishes an award-winning memoir of his Southern travels, *The Land Where the Blues Began*.

**1997**—Rounder Records issues the Alan Lomax Collection, a series of more than 100 CDs of Lomax recordings from the Bahamas, Caribbean, British Isles, Spain, Italy, and the American deep South.

**2002**—Alan Lomax dies in Sarasota, Florida, at the age of 87.

[Sources: Alan Lomax, Who Raised Voice Of Folk Music in U.S., Dies at 87, by Jon Pareles, *The New York Times*, July 20, 2002; <http://www.folkstreams.net/film,109> ]



## Background Information

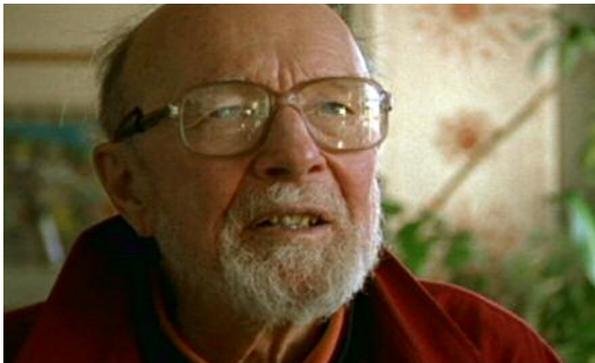
### Selected People Featured in *Lomax the Songhunter*



**Peter Kennedy**—British folk-song collector and Lomax contemporary who passed away in July 2006



**Henrietta Yeruchenco**—ethnomusicologist, and Lomax contemporary



**Pete Seeger**—renowned folk singer and composer, half brother of Peggy Seeger



**Shirley Collins**—folk singer, member of the Ramblers (singing group that included Alan Lomax)



**Peggy Seeger**—folk singer, musician and actress; half sister of Pete Seeger; member of the Ramblers



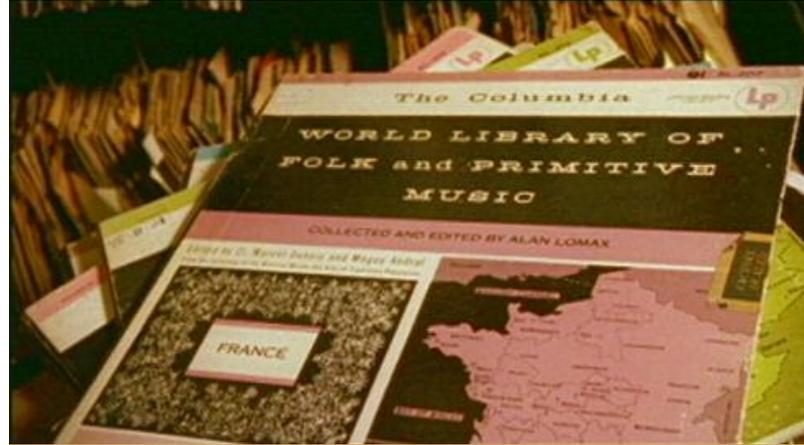
## General Discussion Questions

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen. If the mood seems tense, you may want to pose a general question and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion.

Unless you think participants are so uncomfortable that they can't engage until they have had a break, don't encourage people to leave the room between the film and the discussion. If you save your break for an appropriate moment during the discussion, you won't lose the feeling of the film as you begin your dialogue.

One way to get a discussion going is to pose a general question such as:

- **If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, who would you ask and what would you ask them?**
- **What insights, inspiration, or new knowledge did you gain from this film?**
- **Which scene(s) from the film did you find to be especially powerful? What, specifically, did you find to be compelling?**



*Folk music books*  
Photo courtesy of "Lomax the Songhunter"



## Discussion Prompts

### Preservation

- In your view, what is the value of the kind of music that Lomax collected? If the songs had slipped away and disappeared as those who knew them died, what, exactly, would have been lost?
- Where did Lomax go to find songs? If you were continuing in his footsteps today, where would you go to find music that isn't being heard?
- Do you consider Alan Lomax a hero? Why or why not?
- Who should fund the kind of cultural preservation that Lomax did? Should governments or institutions like the Smithsonian or the Library of Congress spend tax dollars to preserve folk culture and artifacts in the United States? How about from other countries? Why or why not?



*Old record player in use*

Photo courtesy of "Lomax the Songhunter"

### Music

- As you listen to the various songs in the film, what themes and topics do you hear? What do those themes or subjects tell you about the lives of the people who created the music?
- If folk music reflects the lives, concerns, and values of everyday people, what would be the themes in folk music from your community?
- Lomax describes great recording sessions by saying, "The performer gives you his strongest feelings, and if he is a folk singer, this emotion can reveal the character of his whole community." Who is singing folk music in your community today? What do their songs reveal about the "character" of your community?
- Where do you see and hear singing in your community today? Are there work songs? Places where everyone sings

together? What's the difference between singing by specialized performers or professionals and the kinds of singing you see in the film?

- For centuries, folk music has been a way for people to pass along stories from generation to generation. How do people in your life pass along stories?
- What differences do you hear among the music from various places? What do you think accounts for those differences? What do you think of Lomax's theory connecting tone of voice to degree of sexual freedom?

### Culture, Power, and Politics

- What is the difference between high and low culture or between fine art and folk art? What might the purpose be of creating these categories and distinguishing between them?
- Lomax described his work by saying, "I think our job is to represent all the submerged cultures in the world," and to give an avenue for poor and working people "to express themselves and tell their side of the story." To whom were these cultures "submerged"? In your view, why were they "submerged"? How



## Discussion Prompts



did “their side of the story” differ from voices more commonly heard in mainstream or commercial musical outlets?

- Ethnomusicologist Henrietta Yurchenco summarized Lomax’s contribution to society by saying he “changed the view that Americans have of society outside of the elite society. You know, we have the learned society of books and authors and a snobbish upper class that really thought that all of culture had to be according to their design. And Alan is the one that really makes the nation as a whole conscious of the fact that poor people also have a culture—not only have a culture, but a culture...that is as good as the other culture.” For whom were Lomax’s recordings a “discovery”? Who was already “conscious of the fact that poor people also have a culture”? In your view, what is the impact of having people from the elite classes come to recognize, and perhaps even appreciate, music from poor or working-class communities?
- How might gender and race relations impact a researcher’s ability to collect folklife artifacts like stories and music? What guidelines might “songhunters” (or anthropol-

*Michael Taft in The Library of Congress*  
Photo courtesy of “Lomax the Songhunter”

ogists and other researchers) follow to enable them to report on and share what they find without taking advantage of their research subjects?

- Long before current debates over media consolidation, Lomax declared that mass media silenced those who didn’t fit neatly into a commercial mold. In Lomax’s opinion, one consequence of commercial media control over the music that most people can hear is that “our descendants will despise us for having thrown away the best of our culture.” In your view, do current media structures still silence people who don’t have money? Are we throwing away “the best of our culture”? What has been the impact of new technologies on the ability of people to be heard? What kinds of voices tend to be amplified by commercial interests? What kinds of voices tend to be absent?



## Taking Action



*Peter Kennedy with tape machine*  
Photo courtesy of "Lomax the Songhunter"

- Make a list of all the folk songs that you know. Shirley Collins says "in all the good songs and all the bad songs, what you have is the history of the people. It's the memory of the people. It's how they feel about so many things." Choose one of the folk songs you know and study it in depth. Where did you learn it? What is it about? What history does it tell? Whose memories does it include?
- Get involved in preserving folk life (music, art, games, etc.) from your community or family.
- Investigate issues related to folk music and copyright. Who should own and/or profit from music that evolved in a community over time or that is of unknown origin? What are the potential consequences of making folk music into a commodity?



## Resources

### WEBSITES

#### The film

**P.O.V.'s *Lomax the Songhunter* Web site**  
[www.pbs.org/pov/lomax](http://www.pbs.org/pov/lomax)

The *Lomax the Songhunter* companion Web site offers exclusive streaming video clips from the film and a wealth of additional resources, including a Q&A with filmmaker Rogier Kappers, ample opportunities for viewers to “talk back” and talk to each other about the film, and the following special features:

#### ADDITIONAL SCENES

##### *The Songhunter's Trail*

Part road trip, part homage, filmmaker Rogier Kappers retraced Alan Lomax's European travels for *Lomax the Songhunter*. Watch several scenes from his journey not included in the television broadcast version of the film.

#### BOOK EXCERPT

##### *Alan Lomax: Selected Writings*

In 1950 Alan Lomax set sail for Europe with “a new Magnecord tape machine in my cabin and the folk music of the world as my destination.” He landed in London and stayed there until 1958, using the intervening years to travel extensively and document the folk music traditions of Ireland, Scotland, Spain and Italy.

#### IN DEPTH

##### *Folklife and Field Recording*

Michael Taft, head of the Archive of Folk Culture at the American Folklife Center, talks about the state of folklife collecting, the challenges of archiving “born digital” artifacts and milestones in field recording technology.

#### PLAYLIST

##### *Alan Lomax Radio*

In 1997, Rounder Records introduced The Alan Lomax Collection, a multi-CD set of recordings spanning the folklorist's six-decades of recording in the U.S., Haiti, the Caribbean and Europe. Listen to a streaming radio sampler from Rounder's anthology.

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### What's Your P.O.V.?

*P.O.V.'s online Talking Back Tapestry is a colorful, interactive representation of your feelings about **Lomax the Songhunter**.*

*Listen to other P.O.V. viewers talk about the film and add your thoughts by calling 1-800-688-4768.*  
[www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html](http://www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html)

### Alan Lomax

#### ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURAL EQUITY

[www.alan-lomax.com/](http://www.alan-lomax.com/)

This Web site contains links to nearly every major online information source related to Alan Lomax and his work.

#### THE ALAN LOMAX DATABASE

[www.lomaxarchive.com/index.html](http://www.lomaxarchive.com/index.html)

Free online registration gives you access to this comprehensive database of Lomax's audio and video recordings as well as photographs and research from 1946 to 1994.

#### ROUNDER RECORDS

[www.rounder.com/series/lomax\\_alan/](http://www.rounder.com/series/lomax_alan/)

Rounder Records put out many of Lomax's recordings and collections. The Web site offers opportunities to listen to music samples as well as purchase selected recordings.

#### “ALAN LOMAX: GREAT WHITE FRAUD”

[www.counterpunch.org/marsh0721.html](http://www.counterpunch.org/marsh0721.html)

Counterpunch is a bi-weekly political newsletter. This article by Dave Marsh challenges Lomax's legacy and raises important questions about race and cultural cooptation.



## Resources

### Folklore/ Folklife

#### THE AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER

[www.loc.gov/folklife/](http://www.loc.gov/folklife/)

The Web site of the American Folklife Center, part of the Library of Congress, includes definitions, materials for educators and those who want to document folklife in their communities, state-by-state listings of existing American folklore projects and more. The Center also houses the Alan Lomax Collection.

#### THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY

[www.afsnet.org/](http://www.afsnet.org/)

The Web site of the American Folklore Society includes information on what folklore is and what folklorists do, links to folklore organizations and more.

#### PBS: AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC

[www.pbs.org/americanrootsmusic/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/americanrootsmusic/index.html)

The Web site of this 2001 PBS documentary includes a wide range of background information related to folk music, as well as the text of an extended interview with Alan Lomax (click on "oral histories").

#### THE FOLK LIBRARY INDEX

[www.folklib.net/](http://www.folklib.net/)

The Folk Library Index is an ongoing attempt to provide an online index for folk music and related genres (blues, bluegrass, etc.). The site is very useful for finding specific artists. It also provides links to related organizations and a dictionary of terms related to folk music.

#### FOLK MUSIC

<http://42explore.com/folkmusic.htm>

The 42eXplore sites are designed to help launch beginners on investigations of selected subject areas. Their folk music site features extensive links to relevant definitions, scholarship, biographies and more.



*Alan Lomax on CBS, 1991*  
Photo courtesy of "Lomax the Songhunter"

#### FOLK ORGANIZATIONS

[www.jg.org/folk.jg.org](http://www.jg.org/folk.jg.org)

Part of a folk-music web ring, this privately run site provides lists of American organizations and performance venues dedicated to folk music that will be especially useful for people looking for local networking opportunities.

#### PUBLIC DOMAIN MUSIC

<http://pdmusic.org/>

Public Domain Music provides recordings of historical American music from 1800 through the 1920s, organized according to composer, era and style.

#### MUSIC FOR THE NATION

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/musshhtml/musshhome.html>

Music for the Nation is a Library of Congress site that provides general essays reviewing the history of music published in the U.S. and more.



## How to Buy the Film

To order *Lomax the Songhunter*, please go to [www.lomaxthesonghunter.com](http://www.lomaxthesonghunter.com) or email [mmprod@nbf.nl](mailto:mmprod@nbf.nl)



Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and entering its 19th season on PBS, the award-

winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running series on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through October, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought over 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V. is available online at [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov).

### P.O.V. Community Engagement and Education

P.O.V. provides Discussion Guides for all films as well as curriculum-based P.O.V. Lesson Plans for select films to promote the use of independent media among varied constituencies. Available free online, these originally produced materials ensure the ongoing use of P.O.V.'s documentaries with educators, community workers, opinion leaders and general audiences nationally. P.O.V. also works closely with local public-television stations to partner with local museums, libraries, schools and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the issues in P.O.V.'s films.

Front cover photo:

*Alan Lomax listening to playback in Galax, VA, August 1959.*

Photo Shirley Collins,

Courtesy of the Alan Lomax Archive

Corner photo:

*Sound meter*

Photo courtesy of "Lomax the Songhunter"

### P.O.V. Interactive

[www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. It also produces a Web site for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through community-based and educational applications, focusing on involving viewers in activities, information and feedback on the issues. In addition, [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov) houses our unique Talking Back feature, filmmaker interviews and viewer resources, and information on the P.O.V. archives as well as myriad special sites for previous P.O.V. broadcasts.

P.O.V. is a project of American Documentary, Inc. Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Ford Foundation, PBS and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.'s Community Engagement activities and the Diverse Voices Project is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KCET/Los Angeles, WGBH/Boston and WNET/New York. Cara Mertes is executive director of American Documentary | P.O.V.

### American Documentary, Inc.

[www.americandocumentary.org](http://www.americandocumentary.org)

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, on-line and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.



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